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ABSTRACT

In 1998, the Australian Research Council provided funding for a three year research project to develop professional standards and assessments for the English teaching profession. The project team is a consortium of researchers from three major universities together with the two national English teaching associations and representatives from state government education departments. In this paper, two of the researchers, Margaret Gill and Brenton Doecke from Monash University, and a teacher, Doug McClenaghan, reflect on the collaborative nature of the project and the central role the profession itself is playing in developing and validating nationally recognized sets of standards which will define what both the beginning and accomplished English teacher should believe, know, and be able to do. (Contains 13 notes.) (Author/EF)

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Reclaiming the Word "Standards": Professional Standards for Teachers of English Language and Literacy in Australia (The STELLA Project).

by Brenton Doecke, Margaret Gill and Douglas McClenaghan

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Reclaiming the word 'standards':

Professional Standards for Teachers of English Language and Literacy in Australia

(The STELLA Project)

Brenton Doecke, Margaret Gill, Douglas McClenaghan

ABSTRACT: In 1998 the Australian Research Council provided funding for a three year research project to develop professional standards and assessments for the English teaching profession. The project team is a consortium of researchers from three major universities together with the two national English teaching associations and representatives from state government education departments. In this article two of the researchers, Margaret Gill and Brenton Doecke from Monash University, and a teacher, Doug McClenaghan, reflect on the collaborative nature of the project and the central role the profession itself is playing in developing and validating nationally recognised sets of standards which will define what both the beginning and accomplished English teacher should 'believe, know and be able to do'.

Current state and federal government initiatives in Australia to 'raise the quality of teaching and encourage the development of professional standards'1 send mixed messages about both the nature of teacher professionalism and the development of 'standards' for professional practice. More often than not, when politicians use the word 'standards', they fall back on fairly reductive notions of performance measurement and accountability. It is in this context that the federally-funded research project in which we are engaged, STELLA,2 defines itself. Its brief is to develop professional teaching standards, exemplars and performance assessment portfolios for primary and secondary English teachers, and it has attempted to reclaim the word, 'standards', investing it with teachers' values, knowledge, professional experience and meanings. It is probably important to add that this noble intention does not come out of the blue, but is supported by the current wave of national and international initiatives to raise the quality and status of teaching. An important outcome here has been the establishment of professional

standards-setting and certification bodies3 developed and managed by the teaching profession and affirming the teaching profession's key responsibility in setting and managing its codes of good practice.

The following article is intended to give you an idea of the nature of the STELLA research project and the way we have gone about the preliminary work of developing standards for English teachers in Australia. We shall be focusing on work done by teachers in Melbourne, as that is where we are based, but there are similar groups of teachers working in other states in Australia: the funding which the project received through the Australian Research Council has partly been devoted to sustaining links between these teachers, enabling them to compare their perspectives on the teaching of English. A condition for receiving the research funding was a financial commitment on the part of the two professional associations, the Australian Association for the Teaching of English (AATE) and the Australian Literacy Educators' Association (ALEA) - the former an organisation consisting largely of secondary English teachers, the latter representing primary teachers. The two associations have been instrumental in identifying and supporting the teachers who comprise the teaching panels working on the research project. They have also publicised the project's work at national conferences and in the national journals, as well as supporting workshops and briefing meetings for interested teachers and employing bodies across Australia.

What have the teachers been doing? The teachers meet together outside school hours. In their first meetings they examined the current research on teaching standards, familiarising themselves with examples of policy initiatives at state and national level, as well as developments in other countries. They discussed a number of different standards documents. Many of the current models identify generic teaching competencies and are formatted in the form of clusters of observable skills and sub-skills.4 Others are discipline-specific, written in the form of declarative statements elaborated in descriptive mini-essays.5 Some provide small illustrative classroom cameos, or 'vignettes', illustrating particular skills as enacted in the classroom.6 Not surprisingly, there was a degree of consensus, mainly negative, in the teachers' responses to these documents: checklists of skills and sub-skills lack integrity, denying the complexity, interactivity and contextual nature of any teaching act; mini-essays become unmanageable as they struggle with the utopian task of being all-inclusive; illustrative classroom cameos appear lifeless ('sanitised' is Brenton's preferred word), failing to capture the synergy of good teaching. So what might be better? The teachers agreed they would begin by writing their own accounts of good teaching; they would describe in their own narratives what good English teachers believe, know and are able to do.

The prompt the teachers were originally given was an open one: write a narrative that captures a moment of 'good' English teaching.7 So far we have collected over fifty narratives in which teachers describe examples, or moments, of 'good' teaching in classrooms ranging from Grades 3 to Year 12. The accounts provide comprehensive coverage of the English curriculum as defined in state and national curriculum standards frameworks. They include accounts of work in ESL classrooms, 'Special English' classrooms, and work with Indigenous students. Many of the stories involve sophisticated framing devices opening up several levels of interpretation for the reader or listener. In the following illustration, 'A cloze

encounter of the poetic kind', a teacher begins her account of teaching Year 12 poetry by foregrounding her own academic values. The pun in the title signals the textual status of the story which follows:

> *Many of the best moments in my teaching centre on words, their shades of meaning and discovering ways of making sense, whether the focus be metaphors or allusions in Year 12, or Greek derivations in Year 7. In so many ways, words underpin for me what English teaching is about, for it is through our focus on words and their patterning that we are able to shape and refine our sense of meaning.*

Other stories expose the fine grained complexities with which the skilled teacher manages and makes judgements about student learning in difficult interactive/overactive environments. A Year 7 ESL teacher repositions her own pedagogical content knowledge:

> *I have come to see that more routine and structured tasks also have a role. I now know that part of the struggle to be an effective ESL teacher involves putting aside my own teaching and learning preferences to work with and extend on the strategies the ESL students bring with them to the Australian classroom.*

Yet other teachers create the immediacy of a teaching episode, employing the deceptively simple stylistic device of a 'ripping yarn':

> *So, with fear and trembling, I gritted my teeth and went ahead with it. These were the 10 students who were not aiming to go on to tertiary studies and couldn't make head or tail of Shakespeare on a good day, but who expected that I would have something better for them...They wanted 'practical stuff', they told me, not school stuff that wasn't going to do them any good.*
>
> *This began to have a huge bearing on the way I fronted up to these kids...*

The teachers brought their accounts to meetings. They read them to each other and revised them on the basis of searching questions, suggestions, responses offered by their listeners. It is worth noting that by writing their stories, these teachers are engaging in complex textual practices, producing a variety of texts across a range of genres that mediate their knowledge and experience. When that complexity is matched by their public reading of the texts - and as any good English teacher will tell you, meaning cannot be said to reside 'within' texts, but is generated only through the reading of them - you have something which approximates to the complexities of teaching and the vast array of professional judgements that teaching entails.

But the stories have taken the project further, providing material for critical discussion, where the teachers have teased out the professional values, knowledge and skills embedded in their accounts of teaching and used these as a basis from which to formulate general statements of principle or belief that English teachers share. (We discuss this in more detail below). The distinctive feature of the STELLA project might well be the way in which it has foregrounded the role narrative can

play in professional development and in the construction of professional knowledge. By writing their stories, the teachers have individually and collectively developed their own views of their professional responsibilities, as distinct from (though not necessarily in opposition to) the way politicians and bureaucrats might define their role. And by putting their practice on public display, they have shown a willingness to be professionally accountable in a way which is far more compelling than technocratic models of performance appraisal in terms of quantifiable outcomes. Indeed, the teachers' whole-hearted engagement both in their talk and their writing conveys their sense that STELLA provides an historic opportunity to affirm their professional identity - though they might not quite put it that way.

The post-war period in Australia has witnessed a long struggle by English teachers to assert their professional status, a struggle that is reflected in the history of the Australian Association for the Teaching of English (AATE) and its journal, *English in Australia*8 and the STELLA project has explicitly situated itself as a moment within this history, as part of a continuing attempt by the profession to define itself.

This portentous claim does not quite capture the quality of the discussions in which STELLA teachers have engaged, for it is not as though they have self-consciously and unsmilingly gathered together to do something momentous or historic. Their discussions have been shot through with the paradoxes and ironies of attempting to make general statements on behalf of English teachers in Australia. They have not, however, fallen back on unchallengeable 'motherhood' statements of belief, but have tried to generalise carefully from the stories they have written, accepting the imperative to define and categorise while resisting the temptation to over-simplify or dogmatise.

What have they learnt from their experiment? Firstly, it became apparent early on that there is not a great deal to argue about at the level of the general statements or principles that tend to be adduced when people try to describe good teaching. Usually standards documents contain sets of categories that account for the teacher's skills and commitment in managing and monitoring student learning; that define the teacher's disciplinary knowledge, pedagogical expertise and capacities to think systematically about practice, learn from experience and engage with the wider professional community. In their attempt to identify various dimensions that might constitute 'good' English teaching, the teachers, not surprisingly, covered this range of concerns, finding it easy to match the categories developed by the NBPTS and INTASC, as well as other standards material produced in Australia. But the second lesson they drew from this experiment was more interesting, in that they could not escape a sense of the presumption invested in their 'We', and the inclusions and exclusions that the first person plural inevitably entails.

Rather than an admission of defeat, this experiment has brought the complexities of formulating professional standards to the fore. It is not enough to postulate large statements of principle, as though the general terms in which such statements are couched can transform them into a salient frame of reference for all English teachers across Australia. The challenge as the teachers saw it has been to find a connection between generalisations about 'good' English literacy teaching and actual instances of practice that do justice to both dimensions, accepting the inescapability of formulating generalisations, while not presuming that such

generalisations can fully comprehend the rich particularities of specific classrooms, school sites, systems or cohorts of students.

When teachers have read narratives written by teachers from other regions of Australia, they invariably qualify their judgements about the quality of the teaching described (whether it be an instance of negotiating the curriculum or handling the needs of a mixed ability class or some other aspect of teaching) by requiring more information about the context in which the teacher is working. They have unfailingly demonstrated the situated nature of their own knowledge and experience, foregrounding the need to understand the specific situation which each story describes, acknowledging that their own frame of reference might not be appropriate for judging how adequately the narrative describes 'good' teaching. This has especially been the case when teachers working in metropolitan Melbourne have read stories by teachers from remote communities about their experiences with Indigenous students.

The teachers involved in STELLA have been sensitive to the way their stories mediate their knowledge and experience, rather than providing a direct window on their teaching in some kind of narrow, 'realist' manner.9 They have consciously been engaging in complex textual practices in their bid to construct versions of their knowledge and teaching practice, signalling the textual status of their narratives and framing their stories in a variety of ways.10 Each narrative has thus provided an occasion for exploring a range of interpretations, rather than simply generating one reading - as evidenced when the teachers have not been able to assume a common frame of reference or a set of shared experiences, and they have been obliged to reflect on the assumptions they have brought to their reading of the text.

This may hardly be surprising, given that they are English teachers who are presumably conscious of the complex play between language and meaning, but such textual practices nonetheless constitute a significant point of departure from other attempts to formulate professional standards. Material produced by the NBPTS, for example, refrains from acknowledging its textual status, aspiring to a kind of unproblematic transparency when it comes to defining what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do.

So one outcome of the project will be the publication of a corpus of stories written by English teachers about their practice, exploring a range of dimensions of English teaching and connected to statements of standards organised around the categories of 'believing', 'knowing', 'teaching/learning', and 'professional engagement'. These categories (and their elaboration) remain provisional, and will be finalised only after extensive consultation with the wider profession. The final text will inevitably share many features with other standards documents. However, the STELLA teachers expect that it will constitute a different kind of intervention in the life of the profession than has been the case with other attempts to introduce standards, and that it will lend itself to larger purposes than simply an instrument for career entry or advancement enabling individual teachers to seek certification as beginning and accomplished teachers (as is the case with the U.S. models cited above).

Teachers involved in STELLA have become conscious of the values and beliefs they share, of their collective identity and history as English teachers, and several of their

stories affirm the values of collegiality and collaboration, rather than focusing simply on the individual excellences or abilities that teachers reveal when they perform in classrooms. The STELLA materials will not only affirm these values, but invite other teachers to initiate professional dialogue with each other about their teaching, giving them a collection of narratives against which to test their own beliefs and values, and encouraging them to open their teaching up to scrutiny by writing their own stories or going public in other ways. (Western Australian English teachers have experimented with producing videos that capture moments of 'good' practice.11)

The very processes in which the STELLA teachers have been engaged have evidenced their professional commitment, and it is now a major goal of the project to involve a wider network of teachers in the conversation they have begun. Too often, when you read the standards literature, you encounter a division between the process of developing standards and the standards themselves, a division which is especially marked in accounts of the NBPTS.12 The result is that the 'insiders' who have developed the standards inevitably view them differently from 'outsiders' who must henceforth allow their teaching to be judged on terms which have been formulated by others.

The STELLA teachers (as 'insiders') have registered the deep professional satisfaction they have gained from writing stories and participating in discussions about their teaching practice, and they have lamented the fact that the school day cannot be restructured to allow such talk to take place at their schools. Several have described STELLA as the best professional development they have ever experienced. The challenge is to refrain from treating their professional development as a good by-product or spin off from the real business of formulating standards, and to provide others with similar opportunities for professional development, conceptualising standards as part of a continuing process of development on the part of the profession as a whole.

A STELLA NARRATIVE

By writing their stories, STELLA teachers have opened up their teaching to public scrutiny, allowing their views and values to be interrogated and debated. Sometimes their narratives have provoked radically divergent opinions about the quality of the teaching described. Consensus has usually been achieved, not at the expense of the diverse range of views which the narrative may have prompted, but by a thorough airing of those views, as readers, reading and re-reading the stories, have teased out the multi-levelled nature of each story. At the very least, STELLA teachers have acknowledged the professional commitment of any teacher who has been prepared to go public, and who is prepared to accept the challenge of constructing an account of 'good' teaching: they have all written their own stories and taken the same risk.

The researchers' decision to invite the teachers to write stories was prompted by literary theoretical accounts of narrative, including the burgeoning literature on the role of narrative in educational research. 13 For STELLA teachers, writing stories has been less a way of retailing their pre-existing knowledge and values, than of actively constructing knowledge about their teaching. In the final section of this article we try to illustrate this process by presenting a narrative which Douglas

wrote, including his reflections about the way the narrative developed over several drafts in response to critical feedback from others involved in the STELLA Project.

In the following story, Douglas describes different groups of students engaged in oral activities. The work he focuses on is part of the Victorian *English Curriculum and Standards Framework* (CSF) which specifies appropriate learning outcomes for students at each year level. This framework consists of a number of strands, including 'speaking and listening', and promotes the value of critically engaging in film, television, and other media. As a teacher in a government school, Douglas is obliged to work within the CSF, and the lessons he describes in the following narrative were all planned to achieve CSF outcomes.

Douglas's Narrative

Norman Bates, Abba, and Annoying Neighbours:

The Importance of Oral Language in the English Curriculum

By Douglas McClenaghan

Norman's mother's been dead since we don't know when

Norman poisoned them both as they were lying in bed

Look at him now

He has lost his mind

Dresses in skirts

Now he thinks that he is his mum

Wielding knife-point at everyone

Just one look and mother's back from the dead

Just one look and mother's inside his head

woa woa

Mama mia, here she goes again

My my, Norman is a psycho

Mama mia, someone's dead again

My my, mother's gone and killed them

Yes he's been broken hearted

Blue since his mum departed

My my, did he ever let her go?

Mama mia, now we really know

My my, Norman never let her go

Marion wanted Sam, didn't know what to do

So she stole forty thou from her boss and shot through

Look at her now

At the Bates Motel

She's on the run

But she won't be around too long

Norman's lust for her is too strong

Just one look and mother's back from the dead

Just one look and mother's inside his head

woa woa

Mama mia, here she goes again

My my, Norman is a psycho

Mama mia, someone's dead again

My my, mother's gone and killed them

Yes he's been broken hearted

Blue since his mum departed

My my, did he ever let her go?

Mama mia, now we really know

My my, Norman never let her go

Four Year 11 girls are in front of the class singing about Norman Bates to the tune of 'Mama Mia'. They've written the song as part of their response to the film, *Psycho*, and have decided to perform it, accompanied by a karoake tape. These students have tapped into

Hitchcock's black humour and word-play and are attempting the same with their own work. By choosing to perform their song rather than just hand in the lyrics, the result is richer and more pleasurable for performers and audience. Like all good oral work, this presentation has grown out of and reinforces the class's sense of community and shared experience, and is a social occasion as well as a learning occasion.

Oral work has its own particular pleasures and rewards. It allows me to encourage students to take risks, experiment, be creative and original. The girls in the 'Psycho' group wanted to do something different. They wanted to challenge themselves - engage in the kind of thinking you'd expect from intelligent, confident, articulate students. All the work they've done for me in English over the past year has been great. The whole English curriculum is open to them. But we also know that for many of our students the English curriculum is closed. So I want to juxtapose the 'Psycho' girls with two groups of boys in another one of my classes who also did some oral work, and to suggest that this kind of work offers possibilities for success for low as well as high-achieving students.

Here I'm focusing on oral work as 'performance', i.e. oral work which has much in common with Drama and fields like Media Studies, Art or even Music, and which we can clearly distinguish from 'declamatory' oral work - formal presentations such as debating and public speaking.

Both groups of boys were in Year 8. The task which I'd given the class was for students to present an instructional text, written or oral, individually or as a group. We looked at a few examples, spent some time discussing possibilities, then I got out of their way and let them at it. Most students, interestingly, decided on group oral presentations - and a number of them wanted to videotape their performances. Some students spent a lot of time out of school hours working on their videos.

The first group of students I want to look at are three boys who decided to write a play and perform it for the class, showing how to deal with an unwelcome vacuum cleaner salesman. Two of the boys are confident extroverts. Both like to have plenty to say in class, are boisterous and enjoy attention, but usually play the percentages, doing as little as possible. The third boy, Trent, is quiet, has substantial problems with his literacy skills (he reads and writes at around grade 3 level), and on top of that he has another learning difficulty: he can't follow more than two or three instructions at a time. This student had spent most of the year drawing pictures, colouring in pictures, cutting out pictures. Not, I should hasten to add, at my behest. He's a passive resister.

The students decided to perform a play. They had to plan it, script it, and rehearse, organise costumes and book the Drama room with the Drama teacher, and then perform it. I spent some time conferencing with the group, making a few suggestions about content and organisation. Their purpose was not so much to instruct as to entertain -

'It's gotta be funny', they repeatedly remarked to me and to one another, as they prepared for their presentation. Conversation in the group was animated, with Trent contributing ideas and criticisms, as well as taking responsibility for some organisational aspects. The other two listened to him, asked him to do things and for the first time in the year I felt that he was actively involved in his work. All three were motivated. I can remember one day when one of them even yelled out the window to the Year 8 Co-ordinator who was passing by, 'Look at me, I'm working!'

When they went outside to rehearse they were focused (apart from one occasion when they got carried away and threw some dirt at another group). Their rehearsal looked chaotic, but it was thorough, as was revealed by their performance. It was very funny, witty and entertaining. They set up the Drama room, put on their costumes, and then kept us in stitches for half a period. Trent's contribution was a revelation. He was a very spirited performer, a natural. He showed no self consciousness; he was dressed as a woman and was hamming it up Monty Python style. And he wasn't just showing off, though; his acting was expressive and appropriate. Not only was the performance superb. I was also impressed by their capacity to plan and organise, to devote a fair bit of their own time to the project, and to do their best rather than enough.

Another group of boys decided to make a video about how to deal with annoying neighbours. I was sceptical about the possibility of this group producing anything at all. The five boys, with one exception, were passive resisters, kids who could make no connections whatsoever with what they were offered in English. Whenever I enquired about the video's progress they confidently told me that it was coming along fine. Screening the video to the rest of the class was an important moment for them - we even had to book a particular room which could be darkened. My scepticism about the group's capacity to work together and produce anything at all was demolished in a few minutes. None of the boys had given any indication during the year that they could be so confident, imaginative and organised. They'd worked together co-operatively (out of school hours!) over an extended period of time, and most significantly, had approached the task with enthusiasm and dedication, and had achieved success - the rest of the class loved it.

But back in regular English classes things didn't change much for these boys. It wasn't as though they suddenly rushed headlong into the richness of the contemporary English curriculum. The success of the oral projects did not carry over into the rest of their work. What, if anything, can be done for these students to build on their success. How might they be encouraged to take up other work in English?

Douglas's Reflection

My original draft was written in an effort to tackle a 'problem' encountered in my teaching. I deliberately wanted to avoid writing about 'good' or 'exemplary' teaching; nothing neat or squeaky clean, I wanted ambiguities and doubts. My focus was initially on Trent - I wanted to explore the value of the work he did with his group and to pose the problem of how this might be reinforced in his other work - but I subsequently expanded the story to include reflection on the other examples of oral performance which I've described above.

This was in response to feedback I'd received from STELLA colleagues, who'd alerted me to alternative readings of my original draft, and who felt that I hadn't actually teased out the full implication of Trent's story. I had a range of videotapes which my students had produced - not only Abba and annoying neighbours, but an investigative report on the relative merits of Smarties and M&Ms, an infotainment program on etiquette, as well as other topics (the annoying neighbours tape included footage of a nuclear explosion which the boys had taken from a t.v. show... just the thing to get rid of neighbours you dislike!). When I described these performances to other STELLA teachers, they suggested that I rewrite my original story, focusing on oral work across the year levels and with a range of abilities.

The collaborative STELLA experience transformed my narrative. The dialogue I had with other teachers involved more than simple feedback and response to feedback: my readers were substantially involved in a re-assessment of what I had to say and why. Authorial intention gave way to audience response. I saw that there were other stories to be told and that my central intention was to articulate the value of performative oral work. But I was still concerned not to make my piece merely celebratory, or only to describe good work done by good students. I wanted to convey something of the rich and frustrating mix of students that I work with, and particularly to indicate that there are some interesting congruities between work done by very capable and by much less capable students. As was the case with my original draft, I wanted to keep the waters muddy and to raise questions or issues that my readers might consider, not to provide answers, solutions or certainties.

My final draft seems skewed towards giving greater attention to the boys' groups. I could have presented a more balanced account, giving equal weight to boys and girls, to high as well as low achieving students. But as I redrafted my piece I found myself wanting to look again at issues of boys and literacy. What was it about this task that got these boys going? What does their success in this instance tell us about their needs and how we might go about creating new contexts for such boys to work in? This is one lot of questions which I hope my piece provokes.

What 'standards' does my narrative exemplify? When STELLA teachers have met to discuss their narratives, we have often found ourselves affirming open-endedness, risk taking, challenge, negotiation, and engagement, among many other qualities, as elements of good teaching. Classrooms are first and foremost intensely personal places and teachers

need to be sensitive and responsive to the community and culture of any classroom. My narrative has been as much about people as it has been about curriculum and pedagogy. We need to focus as much on the people interacting through language as we do upon the kind of work being done.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this article has been to convey a sense of the process of developing professional teaching standards as the STELLA teachers have experienced it and to recognise the way this process affirms the status of teachers as members of a 'community of practice', as critical professionals rather than functionaries following someone else's agenda. We have tried to demonstrate the complexities inherent in making connections between general statements of principle and specific instances of practice.

As we reach the half way mark of the project we remain confident that we can achieve an outcome that will merit professional and public acceptance.We will remain profoundly sceptical about developing a reified set of standards that might be used merely to judge an individual teacher's performance. The stories which the teachers have written cannot be used to objectify professional standards in some kind of uncomplicated way for all to see. Rather than reaching this kind of completeness, we see our work as remaining open-ended, part of a continuing process of definition and redefinition, reflection and critique grounded in teachers' knowledge and practice. As well as the print-based project outcomes, we have begun to experiment with the production of a hypertextual version in which the statement of standards, teacher narratives, commentaries, evaluations, teacher discussions and student work and comment are hot-linked and use a range of print, sound and video modes. In this format the profession might add to these web documents, thus constituting a product that remains permanently open, resisting the temptation to sign off on behalf of future members of the profession.

There is no easy way out. The capacity to articulate what counts as accomplished practice, to evaluate and enforce standards of practice, is the defining credential of a professional body, the foundation for public credibility and trust. Standards enable the profession to take responsibility for setting its own agenda for the continuing professional development of its members. They are the central mechanism for quality control. The catalyst for the improvement of teaching, is the will and courage of the profession and the wisdom of governments in supporting the profession's work.

End notes:

1 Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs 'Teachers for the 21st Century - Making the difference', a

Commonwealth Government Quality Teacher Initiative. www.detya.gov.../publications/reports/t21/t21.htm, 12 September, 2000.

Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee, *A class act: The status of the teaching profession*. Canberra, Senate Printing Unit. 1998

2 Standards for Teaching English Language and Literacy in Australia, a project funded by the Australian Research Council in partnership with a consortium of national professional associations and state government education bodies.

3 For example the Australian Teaching Council; the Inter-State New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), U.S.A.; the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), U.S. A.; the Ontario College of Teachers, Canada

4 Australian Teaching Council (1996) *National Competency Framework for Beginning Teachers*. Canberra: Australian Government Printing Service .

5 National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (1994) *The Early Adolescence/English Language Arts Standards*. Southfield, Michigan: NBPTS.

6 Australian Teaching Council (1996) *Case Studies Illustrating National Competency Framework for Beginning Teaching*. Canberra: Australian Government Printing Service

7 See the STELLA web site at http://www.AATE.org.au/STELLA

8 See Gill, M. and Doecke, B. (2000) 'Setting standards: confronting paradox', *English in Australia*, No. 129 - 30, forthcoming; Hope, A.D. (1965) 'Presidential Address', reprinted in *English in Australia* No. 129 - 30.

9 Belsey, C. (1980) *Critical Practice*. New York.: Routledge.

10 See MacLachlan, G. and Reid, I. (1994) *Framing and Interpretation*. Carlton: Melbourne University Press

11 Hall, G. (2000) 'Going public: Using video to cosntruct images of "good" English teaching', *English in Australia*, 129-130, forthcoming.

12 See Pence, L. (1998). 'Saying so will (not) make it so: Theoretical perspectives in standards setting'. *English in Australia,* Number 122, July; Petrosky, A. (1998). 'Insiders and outsiders: Teaching standards, national certification assessment, and professional development'. *English in Australia*, Number 122, July; Delandshere, G. and Petrosky, A. (1998), 'Assessment of complex performances: Limitations of key

measurement assumptions', *Educational Researcher,* 27 (2).

13 See Connelly, M.F. and Clandinin, J.D. (1990) 'Stories of experience and narrative enquiry', *Educational Researcher* 19 (1); Carter, K. (1993) 'The place of story in the study of teaching and teacher education', *Educational Researcher*, 45 (1); Cortazzi, M. (1993) *Narrative Analysis*. London: Falmer Press; Mishler, E. G. (1986) *Research Interviewing: Context and Narrative*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.